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Item 10 (a) of the provisional agenda*

NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION: VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

Technical session

Programme

The technical session on vulnerable communities has been organized by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and United Nations Children's Fund.

Objective. The objective of the session is to bring the question of human vulnerability into the centre of discussions on disaster reduction. The first part of the session provides an overview of factors that contribute to the vulnerability of communities and their capacities to cope with natural hazards. The close relationship between development and vulnerability, the role of local knowledge and access to information are emphasized as the key determinants in mitigating the damaging impact of disasters. Case studies from Africa, Asia and Latin America, reflecting diverse experiences at the community level, aim at identifying causes of vulnerability and different approaches to reducing it. The overall objective is to make practical recommendations for enhancing the preparedness of communities to deal with disasters and to suggest strategies to reduce vulnerability.

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* A/CONF.172/1.

Part One. Introductory papers

Introduction	(5 minutes)
Keynote topic: Community vulnerability and local knowledge. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies/Japanese Red Cross	(15 minutes)
Response	(10 minutes)
Vulnerability and development. Dr. Richard Jolly, Deputy Executive Director, United Nations Children's Fund	(15 minutes)
Response: Dr. Barbara Carby, University of West Indies, Jamaica	(10 minutes)

Part Two. Case studies

Coping with drought in southern Africa: Ms. Derrina Mukupo, Nutritionist, Zambia	(15 minutes)
Women: their vulnerability and strengths in the face of disaster. Ms. Rokeya Kabir, Executive Director, Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha	(15 minutes)
Society and disasters in Latin America: intervention strategies. Mr. Andrew Maskrey, Intermediate Technology Development Group, Peru	(15 minutes)
Response: Mr. Hiroshi Higashiura, Japanese Red Cross	(10 minutes)
Discussion	(60 minutes)
Summary of discussion	(10 minutes)